

Rhode Island State Planning Council
APPROVED Minutes of Thursday, May 9, 2013 Meeting
William E. Powers Building
Conference Room A
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Members Present

Mr. Richard Licht, Chair	Director, RI Department of Administration
Mr. Kevin Flynn, Secretary	Associate Director, Division of Planning
Ms. Meredith Brady	Representing Mr. Michael Lewis, Director, RIDOT
Ms. Janet Coit	RI Department of Environmental Management, Director
Ms. Jeanne Cola	Chair, RI Housing Resources Commission
Ms. Jean Boyle	President's Designee, RILOCAT
Dr. Michael Fine	Director RI Department of Health
Mr. Ruben Flores-Marzan	Providence Department of Planning & Development
Mr. Thomas Mullaney	RI Department of Administration, Budget Office
Mr. L. Vincent Murray	RI LOCAT, Government Official Representative
Ms. Anna Prager	Public Member
Mr. Peder Schaefer	Representing Mr. Dan Beardsley, RILOCT, Executive Director
Mr. William Sequino	Public Member
Mr. Sam Shamoon	Governor's Designee
Mr. Henry Sherlock	Representing Mr. Stephen Cardi, Cardi Corporation
Mr. John Trevor	Environmental Advocate
Mr. Michael Walker	Representing Mr. Bill Parsons, RI Economic Development Corporation
Ms. Janet White-Raymond	Public Member
Mr. Scott Wolf	Environmental Advocate

2. Members Absent

Ms. Sharon Conard-Wells	West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation
Ms. Kelly Mahoney, Vice Chair	Policy Director, Office of the Governor

3. Guests

Mr. Daniel Berman	Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Corey Bobba	Federal Highway Administration
Ms. Shannon Brawley	RI Nursery and Landscape Association
Mr. Michael Hogan	RI House Policy Office
Mr. Nate Kelly	Horsley Witten Group
Ms. Karyn Lowe	RI Senate Policy Office
Mr. Jim Lucht	The Providence Plan
Ms. Maria Mack	RI Nursery and Landscape Association
Ms. Barbara Petrarca	RI Nursery and Landscape Association
Mr. Marc Petrowicz	RI Nursery and Landscape Association
Ms. Elizabeth Scott	RI Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Catherine Weaver	RI Nursery and Landscape Association

4. Staff – Division of Planning

Ms. Melanie Army	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Jeff Davis	Principal Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Sean Henry	Intern, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Jared Rhodes	Chief, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Karen Scott	Assistant Chief, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Dawn Vittorioso	Executive Assistant, Division of Planning

II. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Chairman Licht called the meeting to order on May 9, 2013 at 9:08 a.m.

2. Approval of the March 7, 2013 Meeting Minutes – *for vote*

Mr. Licht asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 7, 2013. Mr. Trevor moved to approve the minutes of March 7, 2013 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Prager. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

There were none.

4. **Sustainable Communities Initiative Update** – *for discussion*

Mr. Licht introduced Mr. Kelly of the Horsley Witten Group who delivered an informational PowerPoint presentation on the Sustainable Communities Initiative (attachment 1). Having concluded the formal presentation, the Council engaged in the following discussion:

Mr. Shamoon asked where the education piece would fit in. In response, Mr. Kelly indicated that it will be a part of the social equity and economic development components. Mr. Flynn noted that he has been in touch with Commissioner Gist and asked her to be a part of the initiative.

Dr. Fine noted that without a specific focal element, it doesn't appear that issues of health are being included to the degree necessary. Mr. Kelly indicated that there is representation from the Department of Health on the consortium and that the plan is to integrate the health thread into all of the project's focal areas.

Ms. Boyle reiterated that the education issue is not just a social equity issue but an economic development issue as well.

Ms. Army took a moment to reassure Mr. Shamoon and Dr. Fine that appropriate representation from DOH & the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) are part of the consortium. She then noted that these concerns have been included in the Project.

Mr. Berman asked if there were plans to have a Growth Center in each of the cities and towns or in each community. In response, Mr. Kelly said that could be a possibility. He said the intent is to create Growth Centers that will satisfy the different needs. Mr. Rhodes added that Statewide Planning is looking to assist municipalities in identify potential Growth Center locations but that the intent is to provide the cities and towns with the information they need in order to make their own determinations.

Ms. Raymond asked Mr. Kelly if he would review other studies that were completed over the past few years by non-government entities. She noted that several groups have undertaken their own studies in economic development. In response, Mr. Kelly said yes and indicated that they will need assistance, however, from these entities in identifying the pertinent studies issues that they all face.

Ms. Coit asked how the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will be integrated into the Plan. Mr. Kelly indicated that they are working closely with EDC. He also stated that this is in line with the Governor's initiatives. Ms. Coit next asked about the timing. Mr. Kelly said that the Project will be completed by January, 2015. Mr. Flynn noted that the Plan will be completed by this time next year; however, as it is part of the State Guide Plan, it will require the Technical Committee and the State Planning Council's approval.

Mr. Murray stated that he is supportive of the Horsley Witten Group based on past experience. He said that he was particularly pleased to hear that the process is diversity based and indicated that he was in support of having regional outreach for participation and connections among plan elements.

Mr. Licht mentioned the importance of political realities and stated that we must be realists in addition to idealists.

Mr. Wolf questioned if the plans will draw from the “best practices” that other regions have piloted in completing similar work. Mr. Kelly indicated that they will.

Ms. Boyle pointed out that employing e-tools such as Facebook and Twitter could be very helpful in generating a broader base of support for the project. In response, Mr. Rhodes agreed with Ms. Boyle and explained that staff intends to take advantage of the associated tools and is in the process of receiving the needed access approvals from the Department's Information Technology staff.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Licht thanked Mr. Kelly for his presentation and moved to the next agenda item.

5. Green Infrastructure: Land Use, Economy and Environment – *for discussion*

Mr. Licht introduced Mr. Marc Petrowicz, Ms. Shannon Brawley, Ms. Catherine Weaver and Ms. Maria Mack of Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association (RINLA) who delivered the presentation included as attachment 2. Instances where the Committee engaged in discussion are summarized as follows:

Mr. Trevor indicated that he found the environmental impact study interesting and then asked if there was another industry that could be compared to RILNA. Ms. Brawley responded that she was not aware of another RI association that reflects the characteristics of RINLA.

Mr. Licht suggested making a similar presentation to the 195 Commission, which will create multiple partnerships and also suggested contacting the Rhode Island Builders Association.

Ms. Boyle complimented RINLA on their presentation and shared her experiences of resistance and skepticism that she received from private land owners about the use of green infrastructure. She then asked Ms. Brawley to share their practices on how they overcame public resistances. In response, Ms. Brawley explained that working with DEM and other agencies to incentivize programs assisted in the process. She then explained that Chicago created a handbook for businesses and homeowners, which also contained case studies and success stories. Ms. White-Raymond pointed out the potential opportunities presented by the rest of the jewelry district.

Mr. Wolf explained that GrowSmart RI developed a curriculum for local officials which guides them with land use regulations and makes the process less challenging. He then offered the opportunity to collaborate in training municipal officials. Ms. Brawley indicated that she would do so.

Mr. Murray expressed his thoughts of this approach as being more attractive and less expensive; both points are great selling points and are in line with mandates.

Ms. Prager said that the challenge lies in institutionalizing the requirements and then made a suggestion to review subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances with an eye towards finding opportunities to do so.

Ms. Coit next took a moment to introduce Ms. Elizabeth Scott, the Department of Environmental Management's (DEM) Deputy Chief for Surface Water Protection. Ms. Coit explained that Ms. Scott will be working to incorporate the same strategies into DEM's initiatives.

Mr. Schaefer asked if there were similar associations in Massachusetts. In response, Ms. Brawley said yes and also indicated that all of the New England states have like organizations.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Licht thanked the Association for their presentation, announced that he had to depart and turned the leadership of the meeting over to Mr. Flynn.

Mr. Flynn then explained that due to time restraints, he would take several agenda items out of order.

6. FY 2014 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program Tasks Overview – for discussion

Mr. Rhodes presented the proposed FY 2014 work tasks as distributed with the Council packets. Highlights of those items in which the State Planning Council engaged in discussion are as follows:

Mr. Murray referred to task 2045, OWTS and Wetland Regulation Analysis, and asked if the Legislature was aware that this initiative is part of Statewide Planning's (SWP) Work program. In response, Mr. Rhodes indicated that the task was being included in the work plan in anticipation of the legislature's pending action on Senate Bill 672 and House Bill 5425.

Ms. Boyle referred to task 4070, Development Review Board Legislation, and suggested reviewing the City of East Providence Waterfront Development District enabling legislation as it too combines review functions and then indicated that she would like to be involved. Mr. Rhodes said that he appreciated her assistance.

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Flynn thanked Mr. Rhodes and asked him to provide an update on the next agenda item.

7. RI Population Projections 2010-2040 – for discussion

Mr. Rhodes provided a brief update on the finalization of the Program's statewide population projections for 2010 – 2040 as documented in the agenda supplement.

As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Flynn moved to the next agenda item.

8. Community Profiles: Leveraging Census Data in Rhode Island – for discussion

Mr. Flynn announced that this item would be deferred to a future meeting due to time constraints and then delivered the Associate Director's Report.

9. Associate Director's Report

Mr. Flynn addressed the following items under the Associate Director's report:

- Website update;
- Melanie Army, Distinguished Alumni Award;
- Timing is Everything handout;
- May 7, 2013 – Hearing on H 6063 proposing the relocation of the Statewide Planning Program to a new Department of Commerce;
- Projo story featuring Kettle Point Project.

10. Other Business

There was none.

11. Adjourn

There being no further discussion Council member Trevor motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council member Sequino and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kevin Flynn
Secretary